

Message Text

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43

ACTION HEW-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 INR-07 IO-10 MED-02 NSAE-00

PA-01 OES-03 USIA-06 PRS-01 CIAE-00 AID-05 DODE-00

SCS-03 SSO-00 (ISO) W

----- 113821

R 271508Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9807

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SWEL, PORS, AMED, CPRS, BU

SUBJECT: POLIOMYELITIS EPIDEMIC IN BULGARIA

1. BULGARIA IS SUFFERING FROM WHAT APPEARS TO BE A POLIOMYELITIS OUTBREAK OF SOME PROPORTIONS. UNOFFICIAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO EMBASSY INDICATES THERE ARE CURRENTLY SOMETHING OVER 100 CASES IN THE COUNTRY AND THAT THERE HAVE BEEN AROUND 20 DEATHS AS OF JUNE 27. INCIDENCE HAS BEEN HEAVIEST IN MARITSA VALLEY - SOFIA, PLOVDIV, HASKOVO - ALTHOUGH WE HAVE ALSO HEARD OF CASES IN NORTHERN BULGARIA AND ALONG BLACK SEA COAST.

2. EMBASSY'S FIRST INDICATION OF THE PROBLEM CAME ON MORNING OF JUNE 19, 1975, WHEN EMBASSY LOCAL EMPLOYEES ADVISED THAT MEDICAL AUTHORITIES HAD MADE DOOR-TO-DOOR APPEAL THROUGHOUT SOFIA FOR VACCINATION OF ALL CHILDREN UNDER AGE OF 14. EMBASSY CONFIRMED THIS INFORMATION

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THROUGH LOCAL MEDICAL CONSULTANT AND RMO BELGRADE

ADVISED EMBASSY TO CHECK CURRENT VALIDITY OF POLIO VACCINATIONS OF EMBASSY AMERICAN STAFF ON SAME DATE. ALL MEMBERS OF AMERICAN STAFF HAVE BEEN CHECKED AND APPROPRIATE MEASURES TAKEN.

3. A SHORT ARTICLE IN THE JUNE 25 ISSUE OF RABOTNICHESKO DELO, WHICH IS FIRST INDICATION OF SITUATION THAT EMBASSY HAS SEEN IN BULGARIAN PRESS, DESCRIBES AN INCREASED FREQUENCY OF VIRUS MORBIDITY WITH HIGH TEMPERATURES AND IN SOME CASES SYMPTOMS OF MENINGITIS, WITH GRAVE CASES AMONG SUCKLINGS AND SMALL CHILDREN. BECAUSE OF THE UNFAVORABLE EPIDEMIC SITUATION IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES (NOT IDENTIFIED) WHERE CASES OF POLIOMYELITIS AND MENINGITIS HAVE BEEN NOTED, THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH CARRIED OUT A PROGRAM OF VACCINATION AGAINST POLIOMYELITIS OF ALL CHILDREN BETWEEN 2 MONTHS AND 14 YEARS OF AGE. SINCE VACCINATION PROGRAM COMPLETED, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH HAS LIFTED RESTRICTIONS ON PARTICIPATION BY CHILDREN IN EXCURSIONS, SUMMER CAMPS, ETC. OTHER INFORMAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY TENDS TO CONFIRM THAT ALL BULGARIAN CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 14 YEARS HAVE BEEN VACCINATED DURING THE PAST WEEK.

4. BRITISH EMBASSY HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED BY BRITISH FOREIGN OFFICE TO ASK THE DEAN OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS (GDR AMBASSADOR) TO REQUEST AN AUTHORATIVE BRIEFING ON THIS SITUATION. WE DOUBT DEAN WILL SEEK SUCH A BRIEFING BUT WE WILL ATTEMPT TO KEEP INFORMED ON SITUATION.
BATJER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: EPIDEMICS, COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SOFIA01324
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750225-0008
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975069/aaaaahmz.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION HEW
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 MAY 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <29 SEP 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLIOMYELITIS EPIDEMIC IN BULGARIA
TAGS: SWEL, PORS, AMED, CPRS, BU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006